



PUT ABILITY TO WORK

GREETINGS,

October 16, 2002 is National Disability Mentoring Day. On behalf of SunTrust Bank, the Lead Employer of the Virginia Business Leadership Network (VA BLN), I encourage you to consider participating in this meaningful event.

Disability Mentoring Day, coordinated in the Commonwealth by the VA BLN, is designed to bring students and job seekers with disabilities into the workplace where they can learn first hand about career opportunities. This event is part of a **national effort** sponsored by the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD).

National Sponsors include:

SunTrust Bank	American Airlines	AOL Time Warner	Bell South
Cingular Wireless	Citigroup Corporate and Investment Bank		Darden Restaurants
Independence Technology	Microsoft	Pitney Bowes	Tech Access
			Verizon

How You Can Participate in Disability Mentoring Day

- Complete the enclosed application.
- Return it no later than September 27, 2002.
- You will be paired with an Employer Mentor based on your career interests and other information you provide.
- Upon acceptance/match by the Employer Mentor, you will receive a letter that will describe your assignment for the day.
- While we cannot guarantee a match, every effort will be made to provide you with an opportunity to participate.

How You will Benefit from Disability Mentoring Day:

- Gain valuable career information.
- Make new friends.
- Enhance your education.
- Learn how employers are actively hiring people with disabilities in a wide variety of careers.
- Free one-year membership to AAPD.

Please review and complete the form provided below and make plans to join others across Virginia who are participating in National Disability Mentoring Day. A complimentary information sheet entitled 'Tips for a Successful Job Interview' has also been included as a guide for job seekers with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Katherine McCary
Chair, Virginia Business Leadership Network



MENTEE APPLICATION FORM

Application does not guarantee placement

(Please Print or Type)

Date:

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____
Street Address: _____
City: _____ Zip code: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

CURRENT EDUCATION LEVEL:

☐ High School (Grade: _____) ☐ College (Major: _____ Class: _____) ☐ Other:

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE: (or other volunteer activities, hobbies, etc.)

CAREER INTERESTS: (Please rank your interests: 1=First choice, 2=second choice, 3=third choice)

_____ Banking and Finance _____ Government
_____ Arts and Communication _____ Technology, Engineering and Science
_____ Business and Marketing _____ Other (please specify):
_____ Health and Medicine

Will you require any of the following alternative formats at any point during the day?:

☐ Braille ☐ Large Print ☐ Disk ☐ Sign Language Interpreter ☐ Wheelchair Access ☐ Other

Will you be able to provide your own transportation?

SCHOOL OR PROFESSIONAL CONTACT (teacher, professor, counselor, service provider)

Name: _____ Title: _____
School/Agency: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ Zip code: _____

**** PHOTO RELEASE.** I further understand that Disability Mentoring Day can attract attention from the media and that it is used to promote ongoing partnerships between schools, disability organizations, and employers. I hereby grant permission to photograph my above-mentioned son/daughter for promotional and educational purposes.

Signature

Date

Please return this form no later than September 27, 2002. Send information to: Dana Rosanelli, DRS, 8004 Franklin Farms Drive, Richmond, VA 23229 or fax to 804-662-7696



TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL JOB INTERVIEW

The traditional face-to-face interview can be a particularly stressful experience - especially when you have a disability. With practice and preparation, however, you can achieve a positive interview for both you and the potential employer – one that focuses on your strengths and abilities, not your disability.

Listed below are useful tips to help you through the interview process.

Disclosing your disability. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), you are not legally obligated to disclose your disability unless it is likely to directly affect your job performance. If your disability is visible, it will be evident at the time of the interview, so it may be more prudent to acknowledge your disability during the application process.

- If you are comfortable revealing your disability early in the process, give careful consideration to where the information is placed and how it is stated.
- Remember, the cover letter and resume should outline relevant skills, experiences and education for the position you are applying. If you choose to disclose your disability, the disclosure should be brief and placed near the end of the cover letter and resume.
- The information should also reveal your ability to ‘manage your disability’ while performing required job functions.

Preparing for the Interview. To be successful in your interview, you must plan and anticipate every possible question.

- Take the time to rehearse what you will say before making initial contact.
- If you require support for your interview (such as a sign language interpreter), contact their Human Resources department in advance to arrange for this assistance, or have a career services staff person (or another professional) place the call for you and explain how you plan to handle the interview. Advance preparation puts everyone at ease and shows that you can manage your affairs!
- Prepare yourself on how you will handle inappropriate, personal or possibly illegal questions if asked. Mock interview sessions makes for good practice.
- Create a written narrative to supplement your resume that details your abilities if verbal communication is difficult.
- Research and determine any technical support, resources and cost for accommodations that might be necessary for your employment so that you can respond to questions related to this topic.
- Seek advice from other workers with disabilities who have been successful in finding employment.

During the Interview. First and foremost, be yourself and let your personality shine! Focus on your abilities and successes in all areas of your life. Here are some other points to consider:

- Be confident when discussing your skills, strengths, abilities (and disabilities). Address any gaps in your employment history with a positive attitude.
- Plan to actively participate in the discussion – don’t just answer questions. Although the interviewer will take the lead in directing the interview, be prepared to redirect the discussion back to your skills and abilities related to the position.
- *A picture is worth a thousand words* – and so are examples. It is much easier to convince a skeptical interviewer with clear descriptions of how you have performed similar work functions successfully in the past.
- Discuss accommodations that you will needed, how they can be achieved, and how it can help you do your job. This demonstrates responsibility in ‘managing your disability’.
- Conclude the interview by reiterating your qualifications, giving the interviewer the opportunity to ask any further questions, and thanking them for their time and consideration. If possible, find out when a hiring decision will be made or what your next contact with the employer should be.

After the Interview. Follow up with a thank you letter or any other phone calls as directed. Be patient for a response - the hiring process may take longer than you or they expected.

GOOD LUCK!

